

IN THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 1, 6, 11, 13, 15, 16 and 18. These sheets, which include Figs. 1, 6, 11, 13, 15, 16 and 18, replace the original sheets which include respectively Figs. 1, 6, 11, 13, 15, 16 and 18.

Attachment: Seven Replacement Sheets

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in view of the above amendments and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6 and 8-18 are pending. Claims 1-4, 6 and 8-18 are amended, and Claim 7 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter is introduced.¹

In the outstanding Office Action, Figures 1, 6, 11, 13, 15, 16, and 18 were objected to as containing informalities; Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Blomenkamp (U.S. Patent No. 3,959,586); Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 56-70573; Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 56-70573 in view of Sekimoto (Japanese Patent Publication No. JP 7-092252); Claims 7-12 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected claim, but otherwise indicated as allowable; and Claims 4-6 and 13-18 were indicated as allowed. The indication of allowable subject matter is gratefully acknowledged.

Initially, though clarifying amendments have been made to Claims 4, 6 and 13 - 18 neither the scope nor the substance of these claims has been changed. It is therefore submitted that these claims remain in condition for allowance.

In response to the objection to the figures, Figures 1, 6, 11, 13, 15, 16, and 18 have been amended to include descriptive labels as suggested by the outstanding Office Action. A letter submitting replacement sheets for these Figures has been attached hereto, along with seven replacement drawing sheets. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the objection to Figures 1, 6, 11, 13, 15, 16, and 18 be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejection of amended Claim 1, amended Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate every element of canceled dependent Claim 7, which depended from amended Claim 1. Applicants note that canceled Claim 7 was indicated as containing allowable

¹ Support for the amended claims can be found in the claims as originally filed, for example.

subject matter. Therefore, it is submitted that amended Claim 1 is also in condition for allowance, and that amended Claim 2 is in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons as amended Claim 1, on which amended Claim 2 depends. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of amended Claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

Amended Claim 3 depends from amended Claim 1. As discussed above, amended Claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Therefore amended Claim 3 is also in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of amended Claim 3 be withdrawn.

Lastly, amended Claims 8 - 12 were objected to for directly or indirectly depending from Claim 1. As discussed above, amended Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance. Consequently, amended Claims 8 - 12 are in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons, and it is respectfully requested that the objection to these claims be withdrawn.

No further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-6 and 8-18 is earnestly solicited.

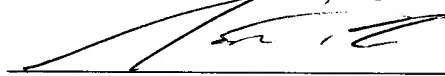
Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the below-listed telephone number.

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Respectfully submitted,

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